

1.4 Military Training

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Australia. The influence of Japanology continued in Australian universities well into the 1950s and 1960s. According to Neustupny, the tradition of Japanology still remained at the University of Sydney, where Sadler first laid its foundation, in the 1980s (Neustupny 1989:85).

Another contribution of Sadler was the establishment of Japanese curriculum for undergraduate students. Sadler's curriculum was built on the balance of language learning and the acquisition of a broad based knowledge of Japan, such as history, literature and other aspects of Japanese culture. This model became the standard for other Australian universities, which subsequently introduced the study of Japan as a discipline.

Another legacy left by Sadler were those whom he had taught. The most prominent of his students, in view of the later development of Japanese education in Australia, was Joyce Ackroyd. She taught at the Australian National University (ANU) when Japanese was introduced in 1962. In 1965, she became the founder of the Japanese Language and Literature Department of the University of Queensland, which remains today one of the most prominent Japanese studies centres in Australia.

After Sadler's retirement, the Chair of Oriental Studies at the University of Sydney was not to be filled by a Japanese specialist for over three decades,¹¹ until the 1980s when the Chair of Japanese was created. Indeed the teaching of Japanese was even suspended for seven years from 1952 until re-introduced by Professor A. R. Davis in 1959. Despite these troubled years, the foundation of the discipline laid by Sadler survived. The University of Sydney today still commands respect for having the oldest Japanese discipline in the country.

1.4 Military Training

At the Royal Military College Duntroon, after the untimely death of Murdoch in 1921, Okada nominally carried on Japanese teaching. At the end of the same academic year, however, Okada left and no full-time

appointment was made. The country was in the post-war recession after World War One, and severe retrenchments were taking place at Duntroon. The College also suffered constant difficulties in obtaining suitable instructors. Although Japanese remained in the curriculum at Duntroon until December 1928, the subject never regained the prestige it enjoyed during the Murdoch-Okada years.

At the beginning of 1931, the College was temporarily moved to the Victoria Barracks in Sydney for financial reasons. During the College's stay in Sydney, as aforementioned, the instruction of Japanese was undertaken by Professor Sadler of the University of Sydney. Upon the return of the College to Duntroon in 1937, however, the teaching of Japanese still faced the same problem, the lack of instructors. According to Brewster, by the end of 1937, the Royal Military College was completely disenchanted with the teaching of Japanese, and its abandonment was advocated by various proposals of curriculum changes (Brewster 1996:14). Brewster cites from the Archive document:

The teaching of Japanese is to be discontinued as this language is of little general cultural value, and, being almost a life-time study, the time spent on it at the College is practically wasted unless its study can be continued afterwards at universities and in Japan, and it is not possible to arrange this entirely. (AA.c cited by Brewster)

Before this recommendation was acted upon, however, an incident occurred in Darwin in 1938, which alerted the government to the critical lack of Japanese language experts in the country. It happened off the northern coast of Australia, near Darwin. Two luggers of a Japanese pearling fleet and some thirty crew members were arrested by Australian Customs officers. They were about to be brought before the Darwin Supreme Court. An extensive search in Australia, however, failed to locate a single interpreter of Japanese capable of assisting the court.

This incident prompted the Department of External Affairs to demand that Australia 'should aim at having, at the earliest possible date, not less

than twenty persons of British birth who can speak Japanese fluently and capable of acting as court interpreters or as censors at short notice' (AA.d). The Minister of Defence requested a background briefing and a sub-committee be formed to examine and report on the issue. It took until January 1940 for the committee to compile a draft report. By that time the war had broken out and the issue of Japanese language training took a different and more urgent turn.

The report estimated that 'the total number of persons in Australia with some knowledge of Japanese was about fifty (50), of whom perhaps two could be considered as first class interpreters' (Brewster 1996:19). This was the current situation when Australia went to war in the Pacific. Despite Australia's advantageous geographical position in terms of gathering information for the Allied Forces in the Pacific, the country was ill prepared for such a military emergency. Australia had been aware of the danger in the Pacific since the Russo-Japan war, and Japanese language training had been initiated by the Defence Department predominantly for the training of military personnel. It is, therefore, astounding that this was the outcome after twenty years of Japanese training within the military forces.

In September 1942, the Allied Translator and Interpreter Section (ATIS) was established near Brisbane. This was an intelligence operation set up by the directive of the General Headquarters of the South West Pacific Area. The primary operations were to be 'scanning, indexing and filing captured documents and materials; translation and reproduction of material; selection, movements, examination and transfer of prisoners-of-war; and collection and dissemination of information' (AA.f). Australia, however, was unable to supply sufficient numbers of personnel with Japanese language skills, resulting in limited functions of ATIS.

Personnel were brought in from the Military Intelligence Service Language School at Camp Savage in Minnesota, and the Naval Language School at Boulder, Colorado. Groups of Nissei were also brought in from the United States. The Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Language School in Melbourne began to supply some of the personnel. In June 1943, ATIS

established its own Training Section to provide language training.

As the war progressed, the demand on language-trained military personnel grew. Air Vice-Marshal W. Bostock, Air Officer Commanding, RAAF Command Headquarters, stated in March 1944 that 'a conservative estimate of the number of linguists needed in the Southwest Pacific Area within the next three years was 400' (AA.e). It was felt that there was an urgent need for a collaborative effort between the Army and the Air Force in terms of language training. The bureaucratic procedures, however, caused constant delays in action.

In July 1944, the first RAAF Linguists Course finally commenced with fifty (50) members of Air Force personnel in training. Army personnel were added to the training some months later. By mid-February 1945, seventy two (72) Air Force, thirteen (13) WAAAF¹², and forty one (41) Army officers were in training. The first group of officers, however, were not expected to complete training until May 1945, only three months before the war was to end.

One interesting aspect of the language training during the war was that the University of Sydney's Department of Oriental Studies was never called upon to involve itself directly in the training of military personnel. Although Professor Sadler and the staff of the University of Sydney, including Miss Joyce Ackroyd, were asked to give lectures in these training courses, the location of the training and the course itself was quite separate from that of the University. Air Vice-Marshal W. Bostock was reported to have felt the course at the University was too academically oriented and was not suitable for practical military training. He recommended that 'the Training Directorate should liaise closely with ATIS and that the universities should ensure that unproductive training and tuition be avoided and the essentials should be absorbed by students in the shortest possible time' (AA.e).

This should be considered as a fortunate turn of events in view of the later development of Japanese education in Australia. Professor Sadler was able to continue teaching of Japanese and subjects on Japan within the

university environment, on his academic principles, without military interference. Academic integrity of the discipline, therefore, was kept intact, at least at the University of Sydney, throughout the war years.

Military-initiated language training in Australia did not produce sufficient numbers of language trained personnel in time to serve war purposes. The language training program itself, however, was deemed successful. The Japanese training course, such as described above, was conducted six times overlapping one after the other, with the last three courses completed in February, March and April of 1946. In the immediate post-war period, therefore, Australia had sufficient number of language-trained personnel to work with the British Commonwealth Occupation Forces (BCOF) in Japan. In fact Australia supplied one hundred and four (104) out of one hundred thirty (130) linguists employed by BCOF (Brewster 1996:38).

It is noteworthy that, although the military failed to produce sufficient Japanese linguists in time to assist the war effort, the Defence Forces Japanese language training indeed made a significant contribution towards Australia's relation with Japan in the peace time that followed.

Apart from the fact that eighty percent (80%) of BCOF Japanese language specialists were Australians, many more young Australians were stationed in Japan. It is estimated that at the height of the occupation approximately twelve thousand (12,000) Australian soldiers were stationed in Japan (Meaney 1999).

It is poignant to reflect on the fact that the occupation of Japan was the first opportunity for a large number of Australians, linguists or otherwise, to come into direct contact with Japanese people. The Australian command of BCOF, acting on government orders, adopted a strict policy of non-fraternisation and banned its army personnel from cultivating social relations with the Japanese.

For the Australian personnel who lived and worked in Japan, however, the strict adherence to the directive was not always possible, nor realistic. Many personal contacts were made, and soldiers in all ranks were exposed

to Japanese people and society. As a consequence, the experience of living in Japan made a lasting impact on many of them, on the young soldiers in particular. Despite the ban on social contacts with Japanese, it is estimated that over six hundred young Australians who served in Japan married Japanese (Embassy of Japan 1979).

The Australian Armed Forces eventually left Japan, but for many who had served in the Occupation Forces, the involvement with Japan did not end there. After their return to Australia, a number of them became pioneer teachers of Japanese in Australian schools, others, in their various walks of life, became advocates for Japan and its culture.

1.5 Post War Questions

It was the Defence Department that introduced the Japanese language education in Australia. The motivation behind it had been the perceived military threat of Japan. With the defeat of Japan, the threat was removed. One of the post-war questions was, therefore, whether or not the language training should remain within the military establishment.

The growing consensus was that language training should be conducted in a more general area of education. In August 1948, Arthur Drakeford, then Minister for Air, stated that he would prefer to see the training of linguists in Russian, Chinese and Japanese undertaken at the National University in Canberra, rather than through any expansion of the RAAF Language School (Brewster 1996:38).

The need for language training, not only Japanese but languages in general, was changing its nature in peace time. At the beginning of the 1950s, the Commonwealth Committee of Enquiry was set up by the Prime Minister. Its task included the examination of the nation's need in terms of language training. By October 1951, the Committee's findings were presented to the Prime Minister. The Committee concluded that the establishment of a School of Oriental languages was a national necessity, and recommended that the emphasis should be placed on the teaching of the four languages, Japanese, Chinese, Russian and Hindustani, with